

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: **FINANCE**

DATE: **APRIL 9, 2008**

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors	Stec
	Belden
	O'Connor
	Bentley
	Tessier
	VanNess
	Kenny
	Merlino

Committee Member Absent:

Supervisor	Champagne
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Others Present:

Frederick Monroe, Chairman
Hal Payne, Commissioner of
Administrative & Fiscal Services
Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board
Paul Dusek, County Attorney
Kevin Geraghty, Budget Officer
Supervisor Simmes
Supervisor Sokol
Supervisor Strainer
Supervisor Taylor
Supervisor Thomas
William Lamy, DPW Superintendent
Todd Lunt, Director, Human Resources
Rob Lynch, Deputy Treasurer
Richard Murphy, Deputy Commissioner of
Fiscal Services
Nicole Livingston, Deputy Clerk

Mr. Stec called the meeting to order at 10:25 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. VanNess and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2008 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Copies of the Finance Agenda were provided to the Committee members, and a copy of same is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Stec advised Item 1 was a request to have Mayor Robert Blais, Village of Lake George, present to answer any questions regarding occupancy tax funding for the Lake George Visitor Center; however, he said, he was just informed that the Mayor was unable to attend today's meeting. He noted the item would be tabled until next months Committee meeting.

Mr. Stec stated Item 2 were requests for Transfer of Funds which were attached for Committee approval and added that Supervisory Committee approval had been obtained as necessary.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve Item 2 as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Stec expounded Items 3A and B were referrals from the County Clerk-Motor Vehicles Committee. Item 3A, he said, was a request to amend the 2008 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$1,531 to appropriate unexpended funds from the 2007 LGRMIF (Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund) grant #0580-08-8271.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. VanNess and carried unanimously to approve Item 3A as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Stec noted Item 3B was a referral to consider a 1/4 percent increase in mortgage tax.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Kenny to approve the request as presented.

Mr. Kenny advised that the County Clerk-Motor Vehicles Committee had discussed this and voted to refer the item to the Finance Committee; however, he said, he was against an increase because he felt New York State had the highest taxes in the nation and he did not want Warren County to have the highest taxes in the State. He further stated that the County Clerk had advised that contiguous counties, Washington and Saratoga Counties, remain at a 1% mortgage tax. He noted that the former Budget Officer had included revenue from the 1/4 percent mortgage tax increase in the 2008 budget for one half of the year.

Chairman Monroe asked Paul Dusek, County Attorney, if the Committee approved the increase, would it be self-executing or would the State Legislation give the County authority through the local law procedure. Mr. Dusek replied that the standard for other counties that had implemented this increase had been through a local law requirement, including a public hearing. Chairman Monroe noted he had received requests to determine if the increase could be higher than 1/4 percent, possibly 1/2 percent increase. Mr. Dusek said he did not recall seeing anything that would prevent that percentage of an increase; however, he added, there were restrictions on how long an increase could remain in effect.

Chairman Monroe noted he had requested to address the Committee later in the meeting regarding the financial status of the County and he would like to hold that discussion at this time. He distributed a packet to the Committee members entitled "2009 Projection of Tax Rates", a copy of which is on file with the minutes. He referred to the last three pages of the packet which outlined the estimated debt costs for the 2009 Budget. Chairman Monroe said there were a few options of action that could lower the overall increase to the County budget. He said the County could dramatically reduce services, layoff employees, eliminate programs that were not mandated by the

State, enforce a budget freeze for 2009 at the 2008 level, and increase the mortgage tax by 1/4 percent which could raise approximately \$1 million.

Mr. Stec agreed with the recommendation to raise the mortgage tax 1/4 percent. He noted there had been similar discussions regarding an increase in sales tax. In general, he said, it was a good idea to look for other sources of revenue.

Chairman Monroe apprised it had previously been reported that the County surplus was between \$500,000 to \$1 million; however, he said, the latest figures indicated that the surplus had increased from 2006 which was \$2.6 million to the current amount of \$4.4 million.

Discussion ensued. Mr. Merlino stated he was in favor of a 1% sales tax increase, as well as the mortgage tax increase. He further noted that fifty-eight counties in New York State had an 8% sales tax. He added an increase needed to be viewed from a business standpoint, as opposed to a political standpoint. He said that he believed if the sales tax was increased by 1%, the County would be in a much better position, financially, in five years.

Mr. Geraghty requested each Supervisor to provide him with a list of their ideas on how to reduce the budget, that he could review and present to the board members at a later date. Mr. Tessier reminded the Committee members that mandated programs could not be cut.

Following discussions, Mr. Stec called the question and the motion was carried by majority vote to approve the request for Home Rule Legislation for a 1/4 percent increase in mortgage tax, with Mr. Kenny voting in opposition. The necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Continuing the Agenda review, Mr. Stec apprised Item 4 was a referral from the Criminal Justice Committee, District Attorney, requesting to amend the 2008 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount \$15,000 to reflect receipt of Operation Safe Child grant funds.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to approve Item 4 as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Stec expounded Items 5A through E were referrals from the Health Services Committee, Westmount Health Facility, and he listed them as follows:

- A) Amending the 2008 County budget, Dietary Supplies, to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$260 to reflect receipt of HCRA (Health Care Reform Act) Recruitment and Retention grant funds;

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- B) Amending the 2008 County budget, Maintenance Salaries, to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$13,422 to reflect receipt of HCRA Recruitment and Retention grant funds;
 - C) Amending the 2008 County budget, Nursing Administration Salaries, to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$1,032 to reflect receipt of HCRA Recruitment and Retention grant funds;
 - D) Amending the 2008 County budget, Nursing Supervisor and RN Supervisor Salaries, to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$5,160 to reflect receipt of HCRA Recruitment and Retention grant funds; and
 - E) Amending the 2008 County budget, Nursing Salaries for RN, to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$15,021 to reflect receipt of HCRA Recruitment and Retention grant funds.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. VanNess and carried unanimously to approve Items 5A through E as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Stec stated Items 6A through C were referrals from the Public Safety Committee, Sheriff & Communications, and he listed them as follows:

- A) Amending the 2008 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$18,828 to reflect receipt of STEP (Selective Traffic Enforcement Program) grant funds;
- B) Amending the 2008 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$39,404 to correct the amended budget amount authorized by Resolution No. 155 of 2008 due to changes in the amount awarded by the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee's (GTSC) grant for motorcycle safety; and
- C) Amending the 2008 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$54,000 to reflect receipt of Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program grant funds.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to approve Items 6A through C as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Stec advised Items 7A through C were referrals from the Public Works Committee. Items 7A and B were referred by the DPW and were as follows:

- A) Establishing Capital Project No. H286.9550 280 - Bridge Maintenance Projects-2008, in the amount of \$250,000, to reconstruct and rehabilitate certain County bridges, with the source of funding to be serial bonds; and
- B) Increasing Capital Project No. H159.9550 280 - Fuel Management Expansion, in the amount of \$65,000 to complete the purchase and installation of the fuel

monitoring systems at the County fuel sites, with the source of funding to be transferred from A.9950 910-Transfers-Capital Projects.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously to approve Items 7A and B as outlined above, and the necessary resolutions were authorized for the next board meeting.

Item 7C, Mr. Stec added, was referred by the Parks, Recreation & Railroad Department, requesting to amend the 2008 County budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$41,020 to reflect receipt of 70% of the State Snowmobile grant funds.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to approve Item 7C as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Stec said Items 8A through C pertained to requests from Paul Dusek, County Attorney, to address the Committee. He noted Item 8A was regarding the contract with Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe and Resolution No. 586 of 2005 was attached.

Mr. Dusek advised that in 2005 a Request for Proposal (RFP) was sent out for bond counsel services for the financing of the Health and Human Services building; however, he said, that project had been delayed and the terms of the original resolution for bond counsel had expired. He further stated he was recommending that Resolution No. 586 of 2005 be amended to let the RFP continue to run until the bonding of the building was completely finished.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously to amend Resolution No. 586 of 2005 to extend the contract with Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe for bond counsel services through the completion of the bonding process. The necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

Mr. Dusek expounded Item 8B was regarding an amendment to the agreement with the Adirondack Regional Business Incubator (ARBI). He explained that the agreement included many different parties which were the Greater Glens Falls Development Corporation, Queensbury Economic Development Corporation, the Town of Queensbury, Warren County Economic Development Corporation, Adirondack Community College and the County of Warren. He noted that this agreement had established the ARBI building on Elm Street in Glens Falls and at one time there had been discussions of selling that building. He added that the County wanted any funds from the sale of the building to be utilized for either another building or the leasing of space. Mr. Dusek apprised the building may be put on the market again for sale and the proposed amendment to the agreement would allow for any funds from the sale

to be restricted to obtain a physical site for ARBI, including the lease or purchase of appropriate facilities.

Mr. O'Connor questioned if ARBI had taken possession of the aforementioned building and Mr. Dusek responded he believed the Glens Falls Local Development Corporation had taken ownership.

Discussion ensued.

Following discussions, motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to table the request to amend the agreement with ARBI.

Mr. Dusek said Item 8C was regarding the appointment of a Management Team Member for the Gaslight Village Property. He advised that the Conservation Easement had a requirement that a Management Team be established within two months of filing the deeds for the property. He added that management issues had already started to arise. He stated the appointment of a key individual to represent the County and to take the lead was needed. Following discussions, Mr. Dusek recommended that the Team member be an elected official to represent the County.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to table the item until the Finance Committee meeting next month.

Mr. Stec advised Item 9 was a request from Chairman Monroe to address the Committee; however, he said, that discussion was held earlier in the meeting.

Concluding the Agenda review, Mr. Stec noted Item 10 required Finance Committee action on the following items as approved by the Personnel Committee: Item Nos. 3A, 4A and 4I.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to approve Item 10 as outlined above, and the necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Kenny, Mr. Stec adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Livingston, Deputy Clerk